

## **Regional policy formation**

### **Legislative framework**

- Law on Regional Development (Žin., 2000, No 66-1987); amendment on Law of Regional Development (2002, No 123-5558)
- Law on the Governing of the County (Žin., 1994, No 101-2015)
- Long-term development strategy of the State (Žin., 2002, No 113-5029)
- Long-term economic development strategy of Lithuania until 2015 (Žin., 2002, No 60-2424)
- Sustainable development strategy (Žin., 2003, No 89-4029)
- Resolution of Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania 'Concerning Master Plan of the Territory of the Republic of Lithuania' (Žin., 2002, No 110-4852)
- Resolution of Government of the Republic of Lithuania 'Concerning criteria of identification of problem areas' (Žin., 2003, No 35-1483)
- Resolution of Government of the Republic of Lithuania 'Concerning setting up of regional development council, its composition, adoption of statute and appointment of chairman' (Žin., 2003, No 69-3132)
- Resolution of Government of the Republic of Lithuania 'Concerning the Programme of Development of Lithuanian Regions and its implementation measures for 2003–2005' (Žin., 2002, No 117-5859)
- Decree of Minister of the Interior of Republic of Lithuania (4th of October, 2002) 'Concerning methodology for preparation and renewal of regional development plans'
- Regional policy strategy of Lithuania until 2013

Regional policy strategy of Lithuania until 2013 was prepared in pursuance to Resolution No 398 of Government of the Republic of Lithuania (8th of April, 2004) 'Concerning setting up of commission'. Strategic goal of Lithuania's regional policy until 2013 is to improve territorial social cohesion. The strategy suggests that 5 regional centres surrounded by the territories of low living standards, which, due to their economic potential may perform the functions of regional growth centres, namely Alytus, Marijampolė, Utena, Tauragė and Telšiai, with integrated surrounding territories would be developed by 2013. Next important step would be to prepare individual set of measures for every area of Lithuania - rural or urban areas, regional growth centres or socially-developing territories. Individualised measures that are being implemented by sectorial ministries should appear in the main document of national regional policy - National Programme for the reduction of socio-economic development imbalances among the regions.

## **Regional policy implementation**

### **Regional development programme of the Republic of Lithuania (2003-2005)**

- **Regional development plans**

Implementing Law on Regional Development (10th of December, 2002), in pursuance of Regional development programme of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the Resolution of Government of the Republic of Lithuania 'Concerning the Programme of Development of Lithuanian regions and its implementation measures for 2003–2005' (5th of December, 2002), and following the Decree of Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania (4th of October, 2002) on methodology for preparation and renewal of regional development plans, Ministry of the Interior provided support for county governor's administrations by consulting them in the process of preparation and renewal of regional development plans. Regional development plans were prepared and renewed for all 10 counties of Lithuania.

- **Preparation of project applications for EU structural funds support**

Implementing regional development programme in 2003-2005, according to provision criteria for financial support and for the rules of provision of financial support for the regions approved by the Decree of Minister of the Interior No IV-197 (2th of June, 2003), Ministry of the Interior provided support for regions and municipalities for preparation of project applications for EU structural funds support. According to defined criteria, priority for financial support was given to these municipalities, which corresponded to criteria of identification of problem areas, set by Resolution of Lithuanian Government No 428 (8th of April, 2003). Counties and municipalities submitted 375 project applications' abstracts to the Ministry of the Interior for EU structural funds support. Selected projects were given to experts for preparation of project documentation: in total 145 project applications were selected. (Table No 1)

5 energetic audits with completed project applications, 3 investment projects and 2 feasibility studies were prepared in 2004.

**Table No 1. Project applications under SPD measures**

COUNTY	A L Y T A U S	K A U N O	K L A I P È D O S	M A R I J A M P O L È S	P A N E V È Ž I O	Š I A U L I Ų	T A U R A G È S	T E L Š I Ų	U T E N O S	V I L N I A U S	T O T A L
Measure 1.1. Improvement of Accessibility and Service Quality of Transport Infrastructure	3	5	2	4	4	1	3	5	1	5	33
Measure 1.2. Ensuring of Energy Supply Stability, Accessibility and Increased Efficiency	4	7	4	6	8	8	4	3	2	7	53
Measure 1.3. Improvement of Environmental Quality and Prevention of Environmental Damage					2	4			1	4	11
Measure 1.4. Restructuring and Upgrading of Health Care Institutions		1				1				1	3
Measure 1.5. Development of Infrastructure of Labour Market, Education, Vocational Training, Research and Study Institutions and Social Services	1		2		1	1	1		2	1	9
Measure 3. 2. Improvement of Business Environment										1	1
Measure 3.3. Development of Information Services						2		1			3
Measure 3.4. Public tourism infrastructure and services	6	1	5	3	4	1	3	1	4	2	30
Measure 4.4. promoting the Adaptation and Development of Rural Areas	2										2
<b>In total:</b>	16	14	13	13	19	18	11	10	10	21	145

- **Support for interregional co-operation**

One of the measures of regional development programme is support for the border regions and cross-border co-operation. After adoption of Madrid Outline Convention in 1997, which provides a legal framework for the signing of agreements between regions and municipalities, 6 euroregions were established in Lithuania within a period of 8 years: Neman (unifying some of the regions and municipalities from LT, RUS, PL, BY), Baltic (LV, LT, RUS, SE, DK, PL), Country of Lakes (LV, LT, BY), Šešupė (LT, PL, RUS), Saulė (LV, LT, RUS), microeuroregion Bartuva (LV, LT). About 40 municipalities (out of 60) and 6 counties (out of 10) are the members of euroregions, some of them participate in activities of more than one euroregion.

In 2004, due to increasing needs for financial means in euroregions, also the need to strengthen the administrative abilities of regional and local actors, Regional policy department of Ministry of the Interior provided support under 'Regional development programme' by covering the membership fee for euroregions in the Association of European Border Regions, the Association of Border Regions; organising 2 international conferences, seminars and trainings in order to strengthen the administrative abilities of regional and local administrations; also publishing publications about the euroregions' activities.